

Turning junk into joy

Company takes used supplies and makes them work for homeowners

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By Melissa Mancini

DURHAM -- There is at least one building supplies store in Whitby always in need of more building supplies.

That's because Enviroponsible sells products that are used or which have been discarded from local renovation or construction projects.

If owner Chad Pescod doesn't have the shutter, flooring or sliding door a customer needs, he takes her name down and searches to find a good product to suit her. But it's hard to sell without inventory.



Walter Passarella / Metroland WHITBY -- Chad Pescod of Enviroponsible wants to give new life to used building components like doors and staircase spindles instead of letting them go to landfill. June 30, 2008

Mr. Pescod, 32, is an entrepreneur with a big dream of starting a chain of used building stores that will help the environment and the pocketbooks of his customers.

In addition to the used building stock, he also sells rain barrels that move quickly in summer, but don't help much in winter.

The first year of business hasn't been easy. Mr. Pescod had a painfully slow winter.

The cold months of the year are not an easy time to get used building supplies and Mr. Pescod said he is having a hard time getting contractors to buy into his green business.

Not only is the store catering to a growing "green" audience in Durham, Mr. Pescod's used barrels attract attention from around the continent. He gets calls from people as far away as California and Georgia.

Marcella Palad came from Orangeville to Whitby to get barrels.

"We're trying to improve our environmental impact," Ms. Palad said. "We just planted new trees and we don't want to be paying for all of this water."

An added bonus is that the rain barrels have already been used for something else, she said. She asked Mr. Pescod for as many barrels as she could fit in her car.

Even though rain barrel sales are doing well, the most important thing for Mr. Pescod right now is to keep stocking up his inventory of used building supplies.

"It kills me because I know these items are going into the landfill," he said.

Mr. Pescod is always looking to take supplies off the hands of those renovating their homes or contractors who are just finishing a job.

The most in-demand products are kitchen cabinets, windows, doors and flooring.

"Especially kitchen cabinets," he said. "I will pay for kitchen cabinets."

He said he doesn't know why contractors have been so reluctant to get on board with the idea.

Part of the problem is due to the logistics of picking up supplies, he said. But what he needs is forward-thinking contractors who would be willing to do business with him.

The most rewarding part of running the store the past year has been when Mr. Pescod is able to find a used supply for someone that fits just right in his house, he said.

"When someone like a new homeowner or someone with a low income comes into the store and finds a vanity that is only \$35 but is going to make their house look like a million bucks, that's the best part," he said.

For more information on Enviroponsible, visit in-store at 1390 Hopkins St., Unit 5, online at www.enviroponsible.com or call Chad at 905-666-2002.